DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 194 928 CS 503 130

AUTHOR Ranta, Richard R., Comp.
TITLE A Model for Departmental Curricular Change: An SREB/SSCA Undergraduate Education Reform Project Report.
INSTITUTION Southern Regional Education Board, Atlanta, Ga. Undergraduate Education Reform Project.; Southern Speech Association, Knoxville, Tenn.
PUB DATE Jun 79
NOTE 45p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Change Strategies; Curriculum Development; *Departments; Educational Administration; *Educational Change; Educational Improvement; *Educational Innovation; Higher Education; Models; Program Descriptions; *Program Development; Speech Communication

ABSTRACT

This monograph is the report of a project designed to bring alternative means of addressing classroom instruction, curricular offerings, and departmental administration to tradition-bound departments. Section one contains an overview of the project, describing the organization of project, describing the organization of project teams that interacted with three college speech communication departments selected for participation in the testing of the model strategy--a consulting process for organizing and implementing change. Section two contains the fact finding reports prepared after the first visits of the project teams to the departments. Section three contains the evaluation reports generated by the final visits to the project schools, focusing on the implementation of the previous project team reports by the three schools and their reactions to and suggestions for program design. Section four reports on the final workshop of the project, in which the project teams and selected members of the communication departments met to discuss the effects of the project and the available strategies for implementing ongoing curriculum change and development. The final section offers the conclusion that the modeled process was effective in helping educational departments study alternative ways of improving instruction, curriculum, and administration. (RL)

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A MODEL FOR DEPARTMENTAL CURRICULAR CHANGE:

An SREB/SSCA Undergraduate Education Reform Project Report

Project Team Members:

Linda Heun, Northeast Missouri State University
Robert Jeffrey, University of Texas, Austin
Richard R. Ranta, Memphis State University
John L. Sullivan, University of virginia

compiled and edited by:

Richard R. Ranta

June, 1979

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FOREWORD

This monograph is a report of a unique project jointly undertaken by the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) through its project on undergraduate education reform, and the Southern Speech Communication Association (SSCA). Although it specifically sought to bring alternatives in communication instruction, curriculum, and administration to three college speech communication departments, the project was not aimed at improving only the departments of speech communication in the south. Its purpose was to provide and test a model for all academic disciplines who wish to bring too often tradition-bound departments alternative means of addressing classroom instruction, curricular offerings, and departmental administration.

The undertaking was conceived and executed by Bill O'Connell, project director of the SREB undergraduate education reform project, and members of the team listed on the title page of this monograph. Each of us had observed interested and excited professors returning to their home departments only to see the ideas and techniques they had gained in SREB conferences become lost among departmental problems and misunderstandings. This monograph provides at least one model by which such alternatives can be fully and fairly considered at the departmental level. Implemented through the model, they should also stand a much greater likelihood of affecting the lives of the students and faculty of the department.

Let me urge the reader of this monograph to consider the reports of the project teams not for how they may review specific problems in a specific school or field. Rather the reader should view the general process and consider how it might achieve similar or better results in the reader's discipline and/or department.

The members of the project team would also like to acknowledge the assistance provided to them by the Task Force on Innovations in Communication Instruction of the SSCA. Members of that Task Force who have contributed generously of their time and energy in support of the team project, but who were not members of the project teams, were: Ron Bassett, D. C. Gila, Ralph Hillman, Ronne Jacobs, Regis O'Connor,

John Sisco, John Stone, and Jerry Tarver. We would also like to acknowledge the aid and support provided by the presidents of the Southern Speech Communication Association under whose terms of office the project has been carried out: Cal Logue, University of Georgia; J. Donald Ragsdale, Louisiana State University; Bert E. Bradley, Auburn University; and Carl L. Kell, Western Kentucky University.

Finally, the Task Force on Innovations in Communication Instruction and the entire Southern Speech Communication Association want to acknowledge our deep debt to Bill O'Connell and to SREB for the support and funding of this unique model project.

Richard R. Ranta, Chairman of the Task Force
Innovations in Communication Instruction
Memphis State University
June, 1979

SECTION I

SREB/SSCA Project Overview

The joint Southern Regional Education Board's (SREB) and Southern Speech Communication Association's (SSCA) communication interaction project began in 1973 with SREB's receipt of a $250,000 3-year grant from the Carnegie Foundation. The grant permitted SREB to finance a graduate reform project to stimulate new directions in higher education in the south. The specific objectives included developing 1) a greater number of sound options for formal studies leading to undergraduate degrees or meeting individual desires for life-long learning; 2) more rapid and thorough reform as a result of interdisciplinary instituitonal sharing; 3) increased willingness on the part of faculty/administration to re-examine undergraduate education and to consider methods and populations that have not been served traditionally; and 4) plans and efforts aimed toward strengthening undergraduate education in the region through SREB hosted conferences and published reports on such issues as competency-based education.

Because of their involvement in academic governance at their home institutions and their individual concerns for improvement in undergraduate instruction matched SREB's desires, Professor John L. Sullivan of the University of Virginia, and Professor Richard R. Ranta of Memphis State University, both members of the SSCA, became involved with SREB's efforts. Professors Sullivan and Ranta were also aware that the Speech Communication Association had asked each regional association to hold conferences or workshops on the basic communication course during 1974/75. As a result of Sullivan's and Ranta's participation in the SREB project, they concluded that in order to make the project particularly successful, the speakers and topics would have to be discipline relevent. They suggested that a mutual alliance be formed with a professional discipline organization to serve as a model for this theory. In the spring of 1975 at SSCA's annual convention, Professors Sullivan and Ranta brought the SREB undergraduate reform project directors, Ned Moomaw and Bill

O'Connell, before the Executive Committee of the SSCA. They proposed an associated partnership to produce a fall 1975 workshop in innovations in communication instruction to be held in Atlanta, Georgia. The SSCA agreed to the proposal.

The SREB project directors worked with an SSCA basic course committee, which was formed to effect the basic course workshop. Part of the pre-workshop activities included a planning session at the University of Richmond. Seventy-five speech communication instructors from throughout the southeast attended a very successful workshop. As a result of the workshop, individual courses in communication departments throughout the southeast were affected by the innovations presented at the workshop. Additionally, the SSCA created a special task force for innovations in communication instruction, headed by Professor Ranta. For the next two years the Task Force prepared proposals in innovations in communication instruction and sponsored workshops and meetings at the SSCA's annual convention.

Just as SREB and SSCA representatives had concluded that it would be desirable to involve a professional association in the undergraduate reform project to serve as a possible model for a reform, another pre-planning meeting, hosted by Professor Jerry Tarver of the University of Richmond, produced the concensus that another model was necessary to attempt to get the innovations spread th.oughout a department. This time SREB teamed up with the SSCA Task Force in an attempt to affect speech communication departments' curriculum and administration relating to curriculum matters. The thesis was that if the innovations were ever going to affect more than a few already committed faculty and administration, an in depth approach must be used on an entire department.

As a result of this new effort, the SSCA Task Force called for nominations from all schools in the southern region. Three schools were selected because of their commitment to the project, institutional diversity and geographic location. Each school contributed $300 to the project. Onewas a large, traditional state university, another was a regionally-oriented state university, and the third was a junior

college.

Next, project teams were selected to interact with each of the three institutions. Each team was composed of one administrator and a curriculum specialist. The administrators were Dr. Robert Jeffrey of the University of Texas at Austin, who had experience as a departmental chairman and a dean; Dr. John Sullivan of the University of Virginia, who had experience as an assistant provost and a departmental chairman; and Dr. Richard Ranta of Memphis State University, who had experience as an assistant vice president and dean. The curriculum specialist was Dr. Linda Heun of Northeast Missouri State University, who was noted for her work in communication innovations and had served as a member of the faculty at the basic course workshop.

Each team communicated with its respective project school; gaining from the school basic information relating to its faculty, students, curriculum, and administrative structure. Further conversations were held with members of the school at the SCA's 1977 annual convention. Then each faculty member at each school was asked to complete a pre-visit questionnaire (see Appendix A). Next, the team visited each of the institutions during the fall of 1977 and spring of 1978. As a result of that fact-finding visit, reports were prepared stating recommendations for each institution. These reports will form the basis of the following section.

The team then carried the report to the school in the spring of 1978 for purposes of a debriefing session and implementation workshop. Each institution was presented with a list of suggestions which it might implement to solve its particular problems or to improve basically acceptable areas. Specific administrative suggestions and curriculum possibilities were presented at the workshop. The institution was then left to consider and possibly implement the suggestions. In the fall of 1978, the curriculum specialist returned to evaluate the effects of the interaction. The report of that visit comprises the third section of this monograph.

Finally, in the spring of 1979, after a planning section at the SSCA annual convention, another workshop was held in Atlanta. Its purpose was to orient and be-

gin training of other potential team members chosen from the participating schools. The basic idea of the workshop was to prepare those individuals at the participating schools, who had been identified for their potential as possible curriculum consultants, to carry on the work of the SREB/SSCA Task Force project. Officers of the SSCA, including SSCA President, Carl Kell of Western Kentucky University, and the Association of Communication Administration, including ACA's President, Patti Gillespie of the University of South Carolina, were invited to the workshop in order to brief them on the project and to solicit their aid in continuing the project's efforts. The content of that workshop comprises section four.

There are strong indications that not only would the program participants be available for individual consultations for those departments in need of their interaction skills but that ACA and SSCA are interested, if not committed to, carrying on the activities of the project in a formal manner. The final part of the project is now evolved.

The SSCA has appointed another committee to continue work on the basic course. The ACA has offered to participate in a continuing consultant service (see Robert N. Hall's letter to Dr. Carl Kell of May 23, 1979 attached as Appendix B). The faculty trained during the course of the project and specifically at the last workshop are ready to interact as needed. Thus, the project did not conclude in Atlanta, or with this monograph, but will continue as these new consultants interact with new communication departments across the south.

SECTION II

Project Fact-Finding Report

After the first visit to the campus, each team conferred and then assembled a team report. Each report was based upon extensive interviews with faculty and students of the involved department; the chairman of the department; the dean of the college; faculty chairmen; directors or deans of other units; and in most cases, with various campus vice presidents and the president of the institution. The report was also the product of team analysis of the completed questionnaire and the written and published material supplied by each department. Each item of the report reflected a team concensus reached as a result of on-site discussions and later refinements.

Each report is divided into three sections. The first area reflects the strength of the department which the team discerned. The strengths are listed in order to suggest that the department should continue to capitalize on and promote these areas. The second section represents areas of caution. These points are listed in order to identify those practices or directions which the team viewed with concern. The third section is built directly upon the areas of strength and areas of caution. It represents the suggestions which the team had to capitalize on existing strengths and to alleviate problems in the areas of caution.

The reports were intended as a starting point for discussion in the workshop which formed the basis of the second visit. The workshop amplified each area and particularly treated instructional alternatives in greater depth.

What follows are the actual project reports with names excised.

Report #1

Areas of Strengths:

1. The faculty appear to be very competent, highly motivated, well adjusted to each other, and open in their communications. Obviously, such characteristics should be continued and supported.

2. Many of the faculty are viewed by persons outside the area as being extremely able and valuable. The faculty's willingness to go "that extra step" to help in areas with no formal connection to the Department is cited often. Such contacts should be encouraged and rewarded.

3. The area does not appear to be content to sit back on its successes or to become stuck in ruts. New courses and approaches appear to be under full consideration and review. Again, this characteristic needs to be encouraged and judiciously developed.

4. Although there is some evidence of a retreat from some extra-curricular areas (debate), many of the strengths of the area are tied to out-reach type activities and extra-area involvements. These are valuable activities which, when used properly, can reap substantial rewards for the area and faculty. Considerable thought should go into how this characteristic can be used most fruitfully.

Areas of Caution:

1. If personnel, and not the personnel's area, are seen as valuable and worthy, problems can develop for the Department - regardless of the quality of the individuals. It appears that much of the support of the area is tied to the people in the Department and not to the subject matter of the area. Closer links need to be developed between the person and the subject.

2. Some of the area's recent developments are not well understood and are even viewed, in some quarters, with suspicion. The belief exists that courses, such as interpersonal communication, are not proper speech courses and are already being taught in other departments. A campaign needs to be developed to overcome both a

lack of knowledge about the area and its subject matter and the suspicion that the area is marching off in search of someone else's territory before any further departures from traditional speech courses are undertaken.

3. Although movement into development areas could be profitable, and many support such endeavors, greater movement toward the Student Development Division should be undertaken with caution. First, the Vice President is not interested in doing much more in the area then is currently being developed; moreover, he questions whether or not such activities should be separate from academic areas. Second, it does not appear likely that further activity in these areas will result in increased faculty for the area.

4. The practice of supporting one area of the Department with faculty from another area must be viewed with caution. Although temporary enrollment adjustments can be handled by shifts of faculty, the Department should not staff based upon such shifts. The practice of using drama instructors to teach speech courses appears to have retarded the growth of the speech area.

5. The area is very concerned with the new general education proposal. It does appear that the proposal could have a decided impact on student course selection. However, the area should not be overly concerned with this proposal. First, the area has several of its courses required in other areas, which appear to want to keep the speech courses in their requirements or electives. Second, regardless of the stated goals, the general education communication core was written for English. It would appear that a frontal attack will result in failure; thus, other alternatives must be explored. Some will be suggested later.

6. The Division of Community Services is a valuable program and can be valuable to the area. However, it needs to be brought under academic control. Administrators in the Community Services Division should not be permitted to select any instructor they want for academic speech courses. Greater efforts are needed in this area to assert traditional academic rights.

Suggestions for Development

1. The Department needs to undertake a positive public relations campaign aimed at making faculty and administrators aware of what the subject matter of the Department is. Faculty need to know what is taught and how it can help students in their areas, indeed, the entire college. People in political science need to become better aware that debate is still alive and that speech is still valuable for pre-law students. Particular attention should be paid to areas such as management, marketing, and criminal justice, for both interpersonal and public communication.

2. New directions in attacking the general educational proposal problem need to be explored. Look to a team-taught approach, such as one instructor is currently using, even with its inherent dangers. Consider suggestions for speech courses for those students who test out of one of the required English courses. Separate the speaking goal from the English composition goal. Perhaps, even getting the goal converted into a separate and strongly suggested elective would be of aid. Look to the community for support, for strength for the area. Schools and employers recognize the importance of good speech; perhaps they can help get this message to the administration. Some examples of real turn-arounds, such as the former student now employed in out-reach, might help.

3. The area needs to expand its horizons while not abandoning the basic strengths of the program. Further inroads should be possible in areas which appreciate basic speech such as engineering, aviation, education, hotel management, and nursing. Do not just push back to basic skills, which could just lead to more developmental courses; but allies, such as English and reading, should be sought to push the basics back into the departments. Also, other basic communication skills need to be explored, such as listening type courses; such commitments may mean adjustments in the area. Some efforts must be made to get regular faculty out into the community as part of the out-reach program. It may mean learning a foreign language or teaching at unusual times, but this abandoned area needs to be re-

claimed. From it and other efforts might come a community advisory council for communications. Such a group can greatly aid the area in making points with the school's administration and in pointing the way to new developments in teaching and service, as well as other types of aid to the area. Finally, new courses and links should be considered. Intercultural communications should be a successful course on a campus such as this one. Internships, such as the one that the Management Specialist helped arrange, have been found to be extremely profitable elsewhere. Closer links need to be made with journalism and radio-television. There is a vast consumer market for which speech communication has much to contribute, but which seems abandoned to journalism or radio-television or neglected. Perhaps something such as a cinema appreciation course would be a suitable humanity/arts course which the area could run and staff. The persuasive power of the modern speaker is most often found via the media.

Other activities of the project team while on campus during this second visit, but not included in the report, included:

1. Group interaction regarding means of augmenting departmental majors;

2. Individual work with faculty members regarding competency skill testing in interpersonal communication;

3. Individual discussion with interested faculty members regarding their Teaching Skills Inventory and implications for their teaching;

4. Group presentation regarding individual differences and their implications for classroom teaching and testing;

5. Group presentation regarding development of video-taped stimulus tapes for classroom instruction (to utilize available in-house facilities);

6. Followup interaction on formats for individualizing instruction in departmental apprehension lab; improving proposal to develop instructional materials for listening competency; and interpretation of student Learning Skill Inventories administered by interested faculty.

Report #2

Areas of Strength:

1. The establishment of the Department as a separate administrative unit is evidence of central administration support for the discipline.

2. Strong and competent faculty members who are nationally recognized scholars.

3. Strong motivation and sense of excitement about developing a program of excellence and national recognition at the M.A. level.

4. A flexible M.A. program which is adapted to the needs of individual students.

5. Enthusiasm of graduate students who perceive the faculty as competent and interested in their growth.

6. Solid relationship developing with other departments where individual faculty members are valued for their expertise.

Areas of Caution:

1. The lack of a clear departmental focus. There seems to be an unresolved conflict regarding a departmental philosophy of "theory" vs. "skill" orientation.

2. Needed awareness of the continuing nature of the scrutiny of the Department as a new entity in the College of Arts and Sciences.

3. Confusion between the undergraduate course offerings and a "major."

4. A sense of mandate to develop interdisciplinary contacts without prior sense of purpose.

5. The number of graduate students in relationship to graduate courses. Are students able to receive a distinct program in one of the three defined areas?

6. The lack of security and a sense of "groupness" among graduate students; a perceived hierarchy has developed.

7. The lack of definite criteria on which graduate students are assessed and/or lack of communication to graduate students about the basis for evaluation and decision-making.

Suggestions for Development

1. Promote support resources, such as more secretarial help and equipment.

2. Promote the Department by attempting to get more faculty members appointed on University committees and other decision-making bodies.

3. Develop data base on the Department, i.e. instructional cost per credit hour, student teacher ratio, hourage, etc.

4. Appoint a faculty member as "undergraduate advisor" who is primarily concerned with the undergraduate major program and who would serve as a programmatic director.

5. Have a clear rationale for each undergraduate course in terms of its place with the defined curriculum.

6. Determine the difference between undergraduate service courses and those which represent "major" courses.

7. Make a definite commitment to the undergraduate "basic courses"; identify competencies and values for varied majors on campus.

8. Appointment of faculty advisor for the graduate program who is primarily concerned with the development of the M.A. degree.

9. Determine what market you wish to tap for graduate students.

10. Reassess criteria for selecting graduate students.

11. Have preliminary session with each graduate student, with subsequent updating, to review their program and progress with regard to the specific standards which will be used to assess them. Provide a written assessment annually.

12. Have bi-weekly seminars with graduate students and entire faculty where they and you report on own research, talk about professional associations, applying for jobs, advanced degrees, and professional responsibilities.

13. Get graduate students involved in departmental decision-making by appointing them to committees.

14. Facilitate development of "whole resources catalog" for sharing between

faculty and graduate students, include what's working well in classes, course syllabi, etc.

15. Determine an effective procedure of getting M.A. students involved in teaching the basic "courses." If assigned to faculty members, develop rationale for assignment such as growth areas for students, student's background in teaching, etc.

The implementation procedure suggested would be to share a two-day retreat directed toward the determination of departmental focus, the development of definable undergraduate and graduate programs, and the interrelationship of courses. The retreat might also be directed toward determining a clear sense of the needs of the Department in terms of faculty direction and emphasis and a means of coordinating the individual expertise and energy which Department members bring to the Department. The retreat should be scheduled as soon as possible, but should be preceded by the collection of data necessary for effective decision-making and determining the objectives of the retreat.

Other activities of the project team while on campus during this second visit, but not included in the report, included:

1. Group interaction regarding assumptions of individual differences in developing a quality graduate program;

2. Work on instructional techniques for developing competencies in large classroom format;

3. Group interaction on formats for facilitating graduate student growth in a cooperative, rather than competitive, environment.

Report #3

Areas of Strength:

1. The faculty appear committed to, and concerned with, developing graduate and undergraduate programs to meet the needs of students.

2. The Department is viewed by the administration as one dedicated to advising and teaching.

3. Efforts to make the Department visible through a variety of extra curricular programs are viewed positively by those interviewed.

4. Supportive graduate students in a teaching role make curricular flexibility possible.

5. Although much time has been spent on curricular review, the faculty appear flexible and willing to make further adjustments when and where needed.

6. The Department operates in a democratic fashion with faculty members having access to information and a role in decision-making often not available at other institutions.

7. For the most part the faculty are professionally active.

8. The presence of a center for teaching effectiveness should heighten faculty awareness of the need for communication skills.

Areas of Caution:

1. In many ways the curriculum is too rich for the number of faculty involved leading to too many different preparations, difficulty in sequencing courses to fit student schedules, and the offering of a number of courses which do not appear central to the Department's mission. The Department appears too willing to add courses and too reluctant to drop them.

2. The channeling of departmental energies into enriching and expanding course offerings within specific tracks appears to have overshadowed concern for integration within the tracks and the curriculum as a whole.

3. The unavailability of course outlines generally is a serious handicap. It

hampers advising, course integration and student understanding of what course and curriculum outcomes are to be.

4. Data on majors, who they are, why they are majoring, where they are going, is generally unavailable.

5. Concern with the legitimate need for more and better facilities may be accompanied by a lack of effort to use most effectively those that are available.

6. The general decline in enrollment and the small numbers in upper level courses must be reversed.

7. Catalog descriptions of the major requirements are extensively complex and fail to justify the large numbers of hours required. This may inhibit potential majors. The literature available to students about the major fails to exploit potential combinations of courses with other disciplines that may prove attractive.

8. The basic course(s) may not be well adapted to the perceived needs of students at the university.

Suggestions for Development:

1. In order to better integrate the curriculum, the Department first needs to make detailed outlines for all courses available to the faculty and the students. Each course ought to be justified in terms of the Department's mission. Course objectives should be clearly spelled out.

2. Distribution of detailed outlines can be only a first step. Cooperative planning of the specific content of core courses must go on if one course is to build on another. Tracks cannot be integrated on the basis of course titles alone.

3. Attention needs to be paid to enrollment statistics. Causes for low enrollment must be determined and courses pruned when necessary. Large numbers of upper division and graduate courses with enrollments of five and under are a red flag to deans and budget officers.

4. Learning and testing procedures and grading policies, which are reflective of course objectives, must be clearly communicated to students at the beginning of

each course.

5. The Department needs to make better use of courses and blocks of courses in other disciplines in order to prepare students for careers. This may mean re-evaluating the number of hours required for the major.

6. The Department ought to identify specific courses and blocks of courses which are especially adapted to the needs of other majors. It cannot simply proclaim them as relevant. Data should be provided supporting their value and the specific skills developed to appropriate departments and the academic advisors in them.

7. Professional activity needs to be promoted and rewarded.

8. Effective use of the center for teaching effectiveness is important. Many of the strategies employed there may be adapted for the performance course.

9. The graduate program needs to be reviewed, and the "Works in Progress" program revised to insure not only that the program is adapted to students' needs but also that they are progressing satisfactorily in the program.

10. The structure of the performance course and the use of graduate students in that area should be evaluated.

Other activities of the project team while on campus during this second visit, but not included in the report, included:

1. Group interaction regarding assumptions of individual differences within context of classroom instruction and utilization of graduate teaching assistants;

2. Session with graduate students regarding individual differences in learning skills;

3. Session with director of basic course and graduate students regarding re-definition of basic course objectives and the place of this course within major program;

4. Session with interested faculty member regarding in-house production of stimulus teaching materials; connection made with Faculty Development Center to

provide funds and support for this innovation;

5. Session with chair and director of Faculty Development Center to begin plans for shared accomplishment of project suggestions;

6. Group interaction regarding approaches to identifying graduate student target population and approaches to soliciting quality students.

The reports also indicated listings of sources which might aid the schools in improving the curriculum. Some of these were:

Developing the College Curriculum, A Handbook for Faculty & Administrators. Arthur W. Chickering, David Halliburton, William H. Bergquist, and Jack Lindquist, Council for the Advancement of Small Colleges, 1977, One duPont Circle, Suite 320, Washington, D.C. 20036

Individuality in Learning. Samuel Messick and Associates, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1976.

Relating Work and Education, Current Issues in Higher Education, 1977, Dyckman W. Vermily, Ed. American Association for Higher Education.

William Fulkerson, Planning for Financial Exigency in State Colleges and Universities, One duPont Circle, Suite 700, Washington, D.C.

Faculty Development in a Time of Retrenchment, A Change Magazine Publication.

James H. L. Roach, "The Academic Department Chairperson: Functions and Responsibilities," Educational Record (Winter, 1976) 13-23.

SECTION III

Evaluation Visit Reports

This section contains the reports generated by the final visit to the project schools in the fall of 1978 by Linda Heun. The reports focus on the implementation of the previous project team reports by the three schools and their reactions to and suggestions for the project design. Again, names and places have been obscured. Each report included recommendations for participants in the final Atlanta workshop.

Final Report #1

Background:

The makeup of the Speech Communication Department had changed since the time of the first two visits. One of the Department members has been invited to join another area and one will leave at the end of the term to work in a private firm. Another member of the Department returned from a leave of absence and a new member jointed the staff. Given a five-person department, the changes are significant.

I met with the Department as a whole, including the chairperson, for several hours during which we discussed the implementation of the Team Report and their reactions and suggestions to the project design. I also met with the Dean of Arts and Sciences. The Dean was selected based on his perceptions and Dick Ranta's written input.

Implementation of Team Report:

Group members spoke positively of the overall impact of the project on them individually and their department. They cited awareness of and suggestions for enhancing their professional respect as a discipline as a major contribution. When I requested that we go over the Team Report point by point, it became clear that the Report itself had not been used as a potential agenda for action. No specific action was taken on Areas of Caution 1-4 and 6; or on Suggestions for Development 1 and 3. (Individual members did report that the suggestions had influenced their own behavior.) Specific action was taken regarding the recommendations for including speech communication in the General Education package. This was a significant issue at the time of the first visits and Department members felt that the team's input had been vital in their successful accomplishment of that goal. Other specific action that was directly attributed to the Team's input was the development and use of video-taped concept tapes for classroom use. Currently, however, that project was slowing down due the limitation of funds.

There was some frustration expressed at the amount of time spent during the

first visits with the Learning Skills Inventory. After their initial enthusiasm, it developed that they would not be able to actually use the computer program to print the Inventories due to another project on campus which took a different approach to identifying individual differences. They did feel, however, that they became sensitive to student differences and aware of adaptations they could make even without having the actual inventories. I could have avoided that frustration by more careful planning.

Group members then talked about why so little had been done with the actual Report. They examined the usual format for their Department meetings and how they "get things done". They seemed quite open with each other and shared the impact of the changing personnel on their functioning. Several new procedures were tentatively established and they put the other Report items on the agenda for their upcoming meeting.

After the meeting, individual faculty members expressed their concern over departmental leadership which did not facilitate action within the group nor impact within the total school community despite strong individual respect and interpersonal relationships among the group. The leadership problem was underlined in my brief visit with the Dean, who seemed aware of and sensitive to the problems of the Department.

Recommendations for Project Design:

1. Provide more information to faculty about project ahead of time;
2. Have team spend more time with people, singly and in groups;
3. Have group meetings with team on first visit - perhaps include a report on what is happening in the field;
4. Work through Association of Communication Administration to provide more specific help to the Chair;
5. Offer the school an option of having a general approach or a "specific problem" approach;

6. Include a team member who has experience at the community college level;
7. Leave an entire semester between second and third visit;
8. Plan specific timetable for overall visit which is cleared with faculty.

Final Report #2

Background:

Two personnel changes at the school have had significant impact on the implementation of the Team Report. A new faculty member during our first visits became the division chair. A long-time and influential faculty member, who was absent during our first two visits, returned to the faculty. Both Project team members returned for the third visit.

We met for several hours with the faculty as a whole and met individually with the faculty members new to the project. No administrative contact was made as the key person was unavailable. The faculty requested that we send on a written summary report to their immediate Dean as he had seen a copy of the Report following the second visit.

Implementation of Team Report:

Faculty members reported individual and group benefits derived from the Project. While the change in chairperson would likely have involved some restructuring, the faculty was strong in their support of the directions that the Team had suggested. Going through the Team Report point by point, each suggestion had either already been accomplished, had been assigned to a committee and given a place on the overall Department agenda, or would be taken up at the retreat. The retreat was an implementation procedure suggested by the team. The retreat will take place in January and be directed by an outside communication scholar.

The faculty seemed positive about the directions they were taking; although hopeful that committee meetings would be reduced as the issues were resolved. The former Department chair seemed to be integrating into the group and was teaching only one course that term as support for his service to the Department. The returned faculty member seemed somewhat less accepting of the changes, but seemed willing to participate, and try a "wait and see" approach.

Recommendations for Project Design:

1. Distribute more information to faculty members ahead of time regarding goals and schedules of visits;

2. Have a concrete schedule predetermined and checked with faculty for initial inverviews;

3. Make specific suggestions to individual teachers on second visit regarding teaching practices, etc.;

4. Have the workshop over a longer time period to allow interaction concerning the recommendations;

5. Have written introduction of team members prior to visit;

6. Allow school to set specific agenda and bring team members who can cope with specific problems;

7. Include a team member from a similar type of institution;

8. Use a two-day visit format for each step - especially important for larger departments;

9. Have more contact by mail between visits - especially if a full year is left between the second and third visits;

10. Have a full year left between second and third visits;

11. Have SSCA summarize and share the ideas and information gathered through this process so others can learn about unique ways of solving common problems.

Final Report #3

Background:

Interaction at the SSCA convention prior to the visit revealed an internal departmental problem which would likely influence the upcoming visit and had already influenced the implementation of the Team Report. Apparently, the Department members had organized to move on many of the recommendations of the Team and had also tentatively planned a retreat for the summer. At that time, the Chairperson made a decision to hire a new faculty member without departmental input. Several strong Department members took offense and went further to suggest that the Team Report was reflective of the Chair's personal agenda rather than observations during the visits. I set off with slightly less anticipation than for the other visits.

I was scheduled to meet with the Department as a whole; the Chair choosing not to attend. Three faculty members and two graduate students attended. Two people were out of town; the theatre faculty (which included the new faculty member) did not attend; and one person was in the hospital for open heart surgery. I also met individually with the new Dean of the College; the Director of the Teaching Center; and the Chairperson.

Implementation of Team Report:

Discussion with faculty members and the Division Chair revealed that action had been taken on several of the suggestions made by the Team. Specifically, several sessions were held with the Director of the Teaching Center on the issue of developing course syllabi. These sessions related specifically to Suggestions for Development 1, 2, 4 and 8. (Note: Unfortunately, these sessions were stopped after the "internal departmental problem" referred to above. The Director indicated uncertainty as to what her next step should be.) The Chair was collecting data regarding enrollment statistics to deal with Suggestions for Development 3. Specific individuals have been assigned to review the graduate-related suggestions (9

and 10) and report to the faculty.

The individuals attending the group session and I talked for several hours and then had dinner together. They were very open in their comments about the Project and their perceptions of what had happened. We discovered several "communication" problems which had led to misunderstandings. Lack of adequate communication to the faculty led to misunderstanding as to our purposes. For example, an article in the student newspaper, on the day we arrived, described us as an "evaluation" team. Communication among faculty members regarding their perceptions of local problems was limited. For example, the person who was vocal in stopping the sessions, regarding syllabi development, indicated that the sessions were unnecessary - "We all have them; we just don't like having to put them on file in the office!" Another faculty member openly replied, "Oh no we don't; and I don't know how to prepare one!" Quite revealing to both of them.

I believe this meeting was productive. Those attending seemed to accept the sincerity of our suggestions. They were positive to the concepts involved in the Project Design and felt that many of the recommendations would be acted on at a later time. Many expressed misgivings about the chair leadership. The Chair recognized that, for a varity of reasons, he had not been able to facilitate the changes necessary for departmental functioning. The new Dean communicated his positive regard for the Speech Communication Department and his sensitivity to internal problems. It may be that the Team Report will provide a starting point for the new efforts.

Recommendations for Project Design:

1. More information is needed by faculty prior to the initial visit;
2. Have a clear schedule for faculty interviews; suggest a minimum of ½ hour;
3. Include informal interaction with team members for rapport building;
4. Provide specific feedback for department on information gathered from

campus administrators;

5. Leave a longer time for the second visit and use a discussion format;

6. Give concrete suggestions during the workshop; not recommendations for areas of concern;

7. Allow a longer time between the second and third visit;

8. Have less association with the chairperson;

9. Have one-to-one meetings with faculty members on second visit to make specific suggestions.

Comments and Recommendations:

In spite of the circumstances which influenced the relative success of the Project Teams as change agents, all faculty were alike in supporting the value of such a process and rich in their suggestions for improvements in the design. I also have suggestions, as I am sure the other team members do. (It is interesting to me how many of the suggestions made by the schools involved actually were part of the original design, but somehow not carried out because of problems of time, money and communication follow-through.)

Because of the personal and professional skills of people in Speech Communication, I would suggest that the upcoming "training session", planned to conclude the Project as currently funded, use a format of "thinktanking" rather than "training." Selected faculty from the participating schools could be invited to join current team members and selected others who have expertise as change agents. We might move from a brainstorming-and-sharing session to actually developing a paper product which would indicate guidelines for future visits. As we have talked about working with ACA to provide administrative members for future teams, we could include someone from ACA in that session.

Summary:

Thus, the final reports attest to several successes of the project. Not all suggestions were attempted, but many were. Sometimes, changes in the department affected results. However, the aim of the project to involve an entire department in considering alternatives to its communication instruction, curriculum and administration was implemented. Although vast room is available for improvement, the project proved that the idea is basically sound and workable.

SECTION IV

Final Workshop:

Although in many ways the project model for interactions within a department could be complete with Section III, the team had decided early in the project that if the project proved to be successful, an effort would be made to extend the project by training specifically identified faculty of the participating schools. It was also hoped that officers of the Southern Speech Communication Association (SSCA) and the Association for Communication Administration (ACA) might, through a workshop devoted to the project, find justification for continuing the work of the Task Force, once funding from SREB was no longer available. Consequently, after numerous letters, phone conversations, and a planning session at the annual SSCA convention, a workshop was held in Atlanta on May 14-15, 1979. The afternoon of May 14th was devoted to an orientation to and background of the SREB/SSCA project. The substance of this section of the workshop, led by Richard Ranta, is contained in Sections I, II, and III of this report. During the second half of the afternoon session John Sullivan led the discussion on administrative concerns and organizational relationships. Coming from the discussions was the following advice for prospective consultants:

1. Make serious efforts to assure the administration that the project is legitimate.

2. In dealing with a project where one is responsible to the department and not to the central administration, be sure to fully explain why the administration is left out of the chain of communication.

3. Make a careful check of the administrative priorities with regard to tenure, promotion, enrollments, etc.

4. Be sure to engage in cross checking of the administration's views on the department, and the department's perceptions of the dean's view of it.

5. Be sure the individual interviewing administrators knows the language of administration. Someone who is unfamiliar with the shorthand language of adminis-

trators could make a disastrous impression. The midpoint of an interview with the vice president is not the time to reveal that one does not know the meaning of "FTE."

6. It is important to give a perspective of the field and to correct any misperceptions which may exist in the administrators' minds. Often their experiences are limited to the department for which you are consulting, and are not reflective of the field as a whole. Be sure to cross-check all information among various individuals, and do not take any one person as supreme authority on any issue.

7. Be sure to ask for specifics. The vitae of recently tenured people who meet the administration's expectation can be very revealing as to actual practice as opposed to stated policy.

8. Be sure you are able to shift vocabulary from university level to university level. Faculty administrators often do not talk the same language and will become suspicious of those who are not of similar semantic background.

9. Be aware that data is often generated from outside pressures, State Board, legislatures, etc. The data you have provided to you often is not generated for internal use but for reporting to an outside agency.

10. Explore the politics of faculty committee work. Investigate the tenure and promotion success rate for those individuals who are active on committees. Find out what the real criteria are for questions of tenure and promotion: does work, for example, on the curriculum committee really count?

11. In investigating the enrollment pattern be sure to look for various levels of enrollment in classes in addition to the raw numbers. This more sophisticated information could be vital in determining growth, possible weakness in upper division classes, and perhaps even the level of funding.

12. Recognize that faculty other than those in the department are important to meet. Particularly important faculty members are those who serve on the college level tenure committees. Gain their impressions of the faculty who have come before them from the department.

13. Do not neglect process. For example, be sure you have a thorough understanding of how courses are approved. Can a new course come into the curriculum without an old one being phased out? Investigate how the students are grouped. Is a HEGIS code, or something similar to it, used for that purpose? Does the mode of instruction matter? How is it counted? How are majors counted? Do double majors count as one-half or as a whole major in each department in which the student has declared a major?

14. Investigate closely how innovative instruction is rewarded. For instance, does team teaching count a full three hours for each individual, or only one and a half hours? If the latter, faculty members will have difficulty getting the proper reward for the work involved in the course.

15. Be sure to check with the registrar's office to see how and what they count with repect to instructional credits. Become as familiar with their system of reporting as possible; also consider what the department could do in light of the registrar's system. Very often data and techniques are available but the faculty are unaware of them or are not using them. Be sure to check data produced by the department with the data which the registrar's or other central administrators have. Do not just accept the data given to you by the department.

16. Do a thorough investigation of planning, noting especially if plans have a long or short range quality. Obtain role and scope statements, and try to determine if they are realistic, if they are used, and how they are used.

17. Be aware that many administrators' knowledge of a discipline is fairly superficial; more specifically, the basic course of speech communication, for instance, may be regarded as including only public speaking.

18. Be sure to investigate special sources of funding. In most colleges, special discretionary funds exist at various levels. Find out where they are and their availability; then find out whether or not the department 1) knows about them and 2) has been using them.

19. Of course, it is terribly important to decide who to visit. One way of determining this is by asking the department; probably a better way is by checking with people outside of the school who have been there and can give you a more detached view. In all instances be sure to see the finance officer. The knowledge of costs is always important.

20. Try to see students who are not provided by the department. Casual encounters can be very revealing.

21. Be sure to determine the background of the administrators to whom you are speaking. It is important to know whether the dean is from the field of speech communication or from history. His academic discipline often determines his view of your discipline as well as influences his view of the administration.

22. Do not try to impose your own solutions on the school. Remember your role is to gether information and to supply suggestions, and not to advocate solutions.

After dinner the workshop continued on the topic of instructional strategies and tactics. Following the same open participation format used in the earlier sessions, Linda Heun led the group through the instructional intervention format outlined below.

Analysis and intervention for the pilot project were done within the context of national professional issues in the area of speech pedagogy and were guided by the following assumption: the focus of instruction is on student exit knowledge and skills, with learning goals ideally reflecting the development of student skills at all levels of cognition; learning means adapting to individual differences (thereby facilitating goal attainment by all students); and students being involved in the decision-making project to facilitate their long-range thinking skills.

Within this focus, the following four steps were followed by the team member focusing on instructional development. Following step three, interaction occurred with the team member seeking administratively-relevant data and plans for step four were determined jointly.

STEP ONE: Determine the overall focus of the intervention

(the following might be limited on prior agreement with the school)

A. Program Level: Is there a clearly-articulated program 1) defined in terms of student exit skills ("A student graduating from our program is prepared to . . . "); 2) consistent with school support, student needs, and faculty skills; and 3) functioning as designed (e.g. all courses offered; degree tracks functional)? Are courses vertically integrated? Does program meet the special needs of students? Is there systematic input and feedback from students and faculty in program development?

B. Course Level: Are there clearly-articulated course objectives which specify learning outcomes at a variety of levels of cognition; means which will lead to goal attainment for individual students; and testing-grading procedures appropriate for the goals and students? Are course goals and means/grading communicated to students at the beginning of the course? Are higher levels of cognition being developed? Are individual differences accounted for and individual growth developed? Is there systematic student input and feedback?

C. Service Course Level: Are there clearly-articulated courses designed to develop communication skills for non-speech majors (e.g. other departments, senior citizens)? Is there input from service area on needs/goal attainment? Do means facilitate learning of all students?

D. Extra-curricular Level: Are there additional formats (e.g. clubs, seminars, lounges) for students and faculty to interact outside of class?

STEP TWO: Find out what they are doing now

A. Prior to first visit send the faculty the questionnaire (Appendix A) regarding program, courses, professional issues; as well as perceptions of local needs, goals decision-making, and clocks to innovations. Elicit descriptive materials (e.g. catalog, course syllabi, records of enrollment, faculty evaluations, and description of student body).

B. During the first visit conduct individual faculty interviews as questionnaire followup. Conduct student interviews-group and individual/planned and unplanned. In addition to eliciting information regarding classroom goals and procedures, the following probes are helpful: 1) how are speech communication majors perceived by other students, 2) how are speech communication classes perceived by students, and 3) elicit two specific suggestions they would make to improve instruction, major, etc. (depending on focus of intervention).

STEP THREE: Analyze data to determine recommendations

A. Look for specifics regarding intervention focus (see Step One).

B. View responses as a total system; check differences among faculty and between students and faculty.

C. Consider relationship of program to current thrust/issues in the field (current considerations were competency-based learning and testing; declining majors; and increasing class size).

D. Determine what departmental needs emerge; what innovations are most realistic and desired within the context of this environment; and what potential blocks to innovation exist.

STEP FOUR: Determine format for communicating recommendations and facilitating innovation

A. Determine focus of second visit "workshop."

B. Determine feasibility of additional recommendations: e.g. retreats for team-building, links with local support systems and professional information and assistance sources beyond the campus.

C. Focus on: support of what they are already doing, integration of suggestion within the current practices, and involvement of whole department in change process.

D. Facilitate implementation strategies prior to third visit.

On Tuesday morning the workshop began with Bob Jeffrey leading the discussion of "The Process of Helping a Department: Consulting Approaches and Tips." He began

by emphasizing the importance of thorough preparation before embarking on a consulting visit. An important part of this preparation was to define the discipline involved and its relationship to the well-being of the department. He provided a model of this definition in "The File of Speech and Communication" (see Appendix C).

Other conclusions reached during the first part of the morning session were the following:

1. It is very important to develop a totally unbiased attitude for interviews. Try to avoid references to "how we do it at my institution."

2. Be sure to ask open-ended questions which do not lead the respondents. It is best to get their true feelings rather than a parroting of what they think you want to hear.

3. Avoid the pitfall of becoming an information conduit to administrators who may want you to act in that roll. One way of putting them off is to respond along the lines of "I do not have sufficient information as of yet to answer that question." Remember that you are there to help the department. One important way you can help the department is to ask questions they would like to have asked of the administration by an outside consultant. This serves the mission of your consultancy very well.

4. Be very careful in interviewing students. Do not talk about the shortcomings of the program, or even worse, the shortcomings of the program as compared to your own school. Your objective there is to help the department and not to sell your own institution. One way of avoiding embarrassing questions about individual professors is to keep the questions aimed at the general class process and not oriented towards individuals.

5. Be sure to acquire data which compares speech communication GPA's, test scores, and departmental financing with political science, history, etc. A comparative study of the budget of the department should be especially revealing, focusing upon such subjects as percentage of FTE faculty, and overall college and

university budget. Be sure to identify any trends that may be established.

6. It is very important to identify the real decision-making and communication networks within any institution. Do not follow blindly an organizational chart; look for those who really make decisions and at what level.

7. Examine closely the kinds and types of interdisciplinary activity: who really owns the turf and where is the controlling agent in such activity?

8. Explore sources of funding other than state or direct school money. Look for connections with grants or development offices.

9. Finally, recognize that your presence is very important as an outside agent. Carry with you an authority derived from personal merit, disciplinary association, and, hopefully, a well respected home institution. Be aware of this power and use it wisely.

The last section of the workshop explored the question "where do we go from here?" Patti Gillespie, President of the Association for Communication Administration, indicated what the possible interaction with ACA might be. She indicated that ACA has a list of approved consultants who assist the administration of institutions by examining a department. These consultants normally report to the vice president of academic affairs or a similar official. The ACA also conducts seminars for new chairmen. The general cost of ACA consultants is $100 per day, a $50 finders fee to ACA, plus travel, etc. Professor Gillespie indicated that the council for Graduate Schools has a similar consulting program.

With participation from Carl Kell, President of the SSCA, the group next discussed the possibility of SSCA continuing the work of the Task Force. An important consideration was the purposes that might be served. It was concluded that such continuing sponsorship should aid specific departments and the SSCA in general in the goal of improving speech communication curricula and instruction. Under this general heading the conclusion was that consultants could:

1. Aid a department and/or faculty to become familiar with alternative methods

of communication instruction.

2. Aid the department in examining and exploring possible solutions to administrative constraints affecting curricula and instructional goals.

3. Assist the department in examining and finding solutions to resource constraints.

Considerable discussion revolved around the establishment of a permanent committee with the following duties:

1. To identify and train consultants.

2. Work with the ACA in providing teams of consultants. In this configuration the ACA would provide the administrative consultants and the SSCA would provide the instructional consultants.

3. Provide reports, workshops for concerned groups, and programs at conventions. Each of these activities would cover areas of factual findings and advice for carrying on various projects.

There was also belief that the committee could act as an evaluative or developmental instrument as well. It could, for instance, develop possible areas by pursuing grants. The conclusion was that while many of these were good ideas, the SSCA was in no position to commit to a full development of all such leads at this moment. There was, however, considerable interest from Professor Kell in developing the work of the Task Force further. The first interrelated step would be the development of another basic course workshop. He also urged the continued work of the Task Force in the interim to make available the resources of the trained individuals and other members of the Task Force to SSCA schools.

The session concluded with the commitment to produce this report for use by the newly trained faculty members as well as for use by other individuals who might profit from the interaction model which had been developed.

SECTION V

Conclusions:

There was not question but that the interaction model project was a success. The three institutions directly involved in the project were helped significantly, and have been helpful in return to its ongoing possibilities. The SSCA and the ACA are interested in continuing the work of the project and the Task Force. Robert Hall, staff coordinator for the Association for Communication Administration, has written to Carl Kell, President of the Southern Speech Communication Association, to "offer the services of the ACA as a joint sponsor for the consultant service the SREB proposed and tested" (see Appendix B).

This is not to say that the project was perfect. Section III has identified a variety of areas which need improvement. There will always be factors interrelating with the project at specific schools which will lie beyond its control and affect its success. It is not unusual to expect, for example, that over the time involved in a consultancy, situations within departments may change dramatically. Project teams must be aware of this possibility and able to adapt to the changing situation.

The overriding conclusion is that a model has been developed and tested which can help provide alternatives for disciplinary departments interested in improving their instruction, curriculum, and administration.

APPENDIX A

SSCA/SREB PILOT PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

_____
Name

1. What curriculum problems concern you most? Please rank them in order of importance.

2. What instructional problems concern you most? Please rank them in order of importance.

3. Please indicate below by a check the appropriate designation(s) the major instructional modes which you currently use.

Lecture ___
Discussion ___
Self-paced instruction ___
Program instruction ___
Competency based instruction ___
Media assisted instruction ___
Other ___

NOTE: It is extremely important that we have your response to this questionnaire as soon as possible. Please to not hold questionnaire. Return it to your chairman for transmission to the project team as quickly as possible.

APPENDIX B

ASSOCIATION FOR COMMUNICATION ADMINISTRATION

5205 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, Virginia 22041
(703) 379-1888

President
PATTI P. GILLESPIE
Theatre & Speech Dept.
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC 29208
803-777-4288

Vice President
RICHARD RIEKE
Communication Dept.
University of Utah
Salt Lake City, UT 84112
801-581-6671

Executive Committee
JON HALL
Speech Dept.
University of Northern Iowa
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319-273-2217

JACK MATTHEWS
Speech & Theatre Arts Dept.
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-6570

BARBARA A. O'CONNOR
Comm. Studies Dept.
California State University
Sacramento, CA 95819
916-454-6805

JOHN SULLIVAN
Speech Comm. Dept.
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, VA 22903
804-924-3120

GARY B. WILSON
Comm. Arts Dept.
Pacific Lutheran University
Tacoma, WA 98447
206-531-6900, 305

DARLYN R. WOLVIN
Speech Comm. & Theatre Dept.
Prince George's Comm. Col.
301 Largo Road
Largo, MD 20870
301-336-6000, 332

ROY V. WOOD
School of Speech
Northwestern University
Evanston, IL 60201
312-492-7215

Staff Coordinator/Editor
ROBERT N. HALL
ACA/SCA National Office
5205 Leesburg Pike, Suite 1001
Falls Church, VA 22041
703-379-1888

Book Review Editor
JAMES E. ROEVER
Speech Comm. Dept.
SUNY College
New Paltz, NY 12562
914-257-2600

May 23, 1979

Dr. Carl Kell
Communication and Theatre Department
Western Kentucky University
Bowling Green, KY 42101

Dear Carl:

Patti Gillespie, who attended the consultants workshop in Atlanta, informed me that the Southern Regional Education Board was going to self-destruct and that it had requested SSCA to take-over part of its program.

I have been authorized to offer the services of the ACA as a joint sponsor for the consultant service the SREB proposed and tested. Since the ACA currently has its administrative consultant service, it seems propitious for the ACA to provide administrative consultants while SSCA provides the curriculum consultants. This seems to me to be a good joint project for our two associations.

If the ACA joint sponsorship is welcome, do let me know and we can proceed to work out a plan of action.

My best regards.

Sincerely yours,

Robert N. Hall
Staff Coordinator

RNH:pht

APPENDIX C

THE FIELD OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION

A department of speech communication studies man from the point of view of his communicative behavior. Just as political scientists are concerned with political behavior, sociologists with social behavior, and psychologists with individual behavior as points of departure, a student of communication begins his concern with communicative behavior. Although some variables are examined by social scientists from several disciplines, communication scholars center uniquely on communicative dimensions. For example, some political scientists might be concerned with the credibility of political figures, some psychologists might be interested in the level of trust in personal relationships, and some sociologists might examine the varying levels of believability of different news media, but none of these scholars would take the construct "ethos-credibility-trust" as the central point of departure, and examine the way it functions across situations in a society.

Communication studies embraces concerns both in contemporary society and in past societies. Although communication departments were not formed until early in this century, the study of persuasion can be traced to ancient Greece. Communication scholars study the classical tradition, which began in Greece and which found its fullest expression in The Rhetoric of Aristotle. It continued particularly in the writings of Cicero and Quintillian in Rome and became a vital part of medieval education. It found eloquent expression in eighteenth century Britain, and was a key part of early higher education in the United States. From this tradition of the study of persuasion came two central ideas which form an important base for scholarship in communication studies:

1. There is an important relationship between the nature of a society and the nature of its rhetoric. Responsible rhetoric is practical only in a free society, and a free society requires the study of communication and persuasion.

2. Responsible communication demands concern for content as well as style and delivery, lest rhetoric become sophistic.

In Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic, Charles Sears Baldwin says "Sophistic is the historic demonstration of what oratory becomes when it is removed from the urgency of subject matter." Hence a modern department of speech communication attempts to tie a current concern for the communicative dimension of our society with the classical tradition in the study of rhetoric. It properly focuses on the critical public address that dramatizes key events in our political and social system, on theories of communication, and on the interpersonal contact through which individual and group decisions are made in our social system.

Just as the other social sciences have undergone empirical revolutions in the twentieth century, so has the field of communication. The few experiments that were performed prior to World War II were the forerunners of the current full-scale quantitative approach to the study of communicative phenomena. What was once

primarily a historical and critical field now includes sophisticated mathematical procedures. The historical timetable for the empirical revolution in communication study parallels closely those of political science and geography. Yet in communication perhaps more than in other social sciences, the empirical revolution has been accomplished without a concomitant elimination of the historical and critical dimension of study. Criticism of presidential speech making exists alongside experimental research in the mechanisms of attitude change.